

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

## Wycoller Hall at Christmas

At Wycoller Hall, nestled amidst the rolling hills of the English countryside, a time-honored tradition took place each year. As the winter winds whispered through the ancient walls, the family threw open their doors for twelve days of festive revelry during Christmas.

The heart of the celebration was the grand hall, a magnificent space adorned with intricate ashlar work. A long table stretched across the hall, laden with a feast fit for kings. Platters of fragrant roasted beef, succulent roast goose, and a steaming pudding adorned the table, surrounded by bowls of nourishing frumenty made from husked wheat. The air was filled with the tantalizing aromas of the feast, enticing the guests with their irresistible allure.

As the morning sun cast its warm glow, the family gathered around the table, eager to partake in the bountiful meal. They sat together, sharing stories and laughter, filling the hall with joyous chatter. Glasses were raised in toasts of gratitude, and the clinking of silverware provided a symphony of anticipation.

After the sumptuous feast, the family retreated to the cozy corner of the hall, where a roundabout fire-place crackled and flickered. Stone benches encircled the hearth, providing comfort and warmth to those who gathered around. The young folks settled upon the benches, their eyes sparkling with excitement.

In this intimate setting, they cracked nuts and shared laughter, finding delight in the simplest of pleasures. They entertained one another with riddles and tales, their voices mingling with the gentle crackling of the fire. It was here, in this cherished space, that something magical happened each year.

As the days of celebration passed, the sons and daughters of Wycoller Hall discovered a subtle enchantment. The crackling fire, the shared laughter, and the stories spun around the hearth wove invisible threads of connection between them. They began to see one another in a different light, finding comfort and familiarity in their shared traditions.

Their hearts opened, and friendships blossomed into something more. Eyes met across the fire, hands brushed while cracking nuts, and laughter turned into shared whispers. The sons and daughters of Wycoller Hall found love, their affections quietly blooming amidst the warmth of the hearth.

In this enchanting atmosphere, they found their matches, their hearts intertwined without having to venture far from home. Love grew in the nooks and crannies of Wycoller Hall, nurtured by the bonds forged by generations past. The ancient walls echoed with the laughter and joy of young love, a testament to the power of tradition and the magic of connection.

And so, as the twelve days of Christmas came to a close, Wycoller Hall stood as a testament to the enduring power of family and love. The young couples, their hearts aflame with newfound affection, carried the spirit of the hall with them into the world beyond. They vowed to return each year, to relive the magic and share the stories of their own happily ever afters.

Wycoller Hall, steeped in history and love, remained a beacon of warmth and joy, a place where the spirit of Christmas and the bonds of family would forever be cherished. And though time marched on, the echoes of laughter and the whispers of love continued to dance within its hallowed halls, reminding all who passed through its doors that true happiness could be found in the simplest of moments.

By Donald Jay